

**The Report of the
Accreditation Visiting Team**

**CBA Center
305 East 200 North, Suite CBA
Delta, Utah 84624**

April 17, 2007



**Utah State Office of Education
250 East 500 South
P.O. Box 144200
Salt Lake City, Utah 84114-4200**

**THE REPORT OF THE
VISITING TEAM REVIEWING**

**CBA Center
305 East 200 North, Suite CBA
Delta, Utah 84624**

April 17, 2007

UTAH STATE OFFICE OF EDUCATION

**Patti Harrington, Ed.D.
State Superintendent of Public Instruction**

**DIVISION OF
STUDENT ACHIEVEMENT AND SCHOOL SUCCESS**

Myron Cottam, Associate Superintendent

**Brett Moulding, Director
Curriculum and Instruction**

**Georgia Loutensock, Accreditation Specialist
Curriculum and Instruction**

Salt Lake City, Utah

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FOREWORD

The major purpose of the accreditation process is to stimulate school growth and improvement so as to increase student achievement.

In these efforts, the school staff makes a comprehensive evaluation of the school's programs, operations, and results. The school determines how actual practices align to stated objectives and resulting outcomes. It is a three-phased evaluation: (1) self-evaluation, (2) on-site evaluation by an external team of educators, and (3) implementation using units of the evaluation to improve the school by effecting thoughtful change.

The evaluation, April 17, 2007, was conducted because of the school's desire to ensure quality education for all students in the school, and to increase student achievement.

The entire staff of CBA Center is commended for the time and effort devoted to studying and evaluating the various facets of the total program and to preparing the materials used by the visiting team. The excellent leadership given by Principal Mike Louder is also commended.

The staff and administration are congratulated for their desire for excellence at CBA Center, and also for the professional attitude of all members of the group, which made it possible for them to see areas of weakness and strength and to suggest procedures for bringing about improvements.

While these recommendations may be used to solicit financial support to acquire some of the materials, equipment, and services needed to carry out a more effective program, it is even more important that the faculty and administration utilize them as they continue to evaluate and modify course offerings and administrative and classroom procedures to more dramatically increase student achievement at CBA Center.

Patti Harrington, Ed.D.
State Superintendent
of Public Instruction

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250 East 500 South
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Salt Lake City, UT 84114-4200

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Box 1780
Beaver, UT 84713
Phone: (435) 438-5843

Josh M. Reid*

201 S Main St. Ste 1800
Salt Lake City, UT 84111
Phone: (801) 536-6787

Marlon O. Snow*

1247 E 430 N
Orem, UT 84057
Phone: (801) 224-6163

Cyndee Miya**

1833 Ridge Road
Layton, UT 84040
Phone: (801) 546-4830

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CBA CENTER
ADMINISTRATION AND STAFF

School Administration

Mike Louder..... Principal

Counseling

Rebecca Callister Counselor

Support Staff

Karen Burraston..... Head Secretary

Faculty

Robert Banks
Jane Beckwith
Valerie Church
Sherry Nickle

Kami Schena
Mari Barnson, Teaching Assistant
Lory Thatcher, Teaching Assistant

CBA CENTER

MISSION STATEMENT

The mission of the CBA Center is to provide students with the skills necessary to become a working, contributing members of society.

BELIEF STATEMENTS

The CBA Center believes that:

School is the students' opportunity to experience acceptance, stability and ultimately success;

Students have needs which must be met before academic skills can be addressed;

Students are the future;

Academic skills are necessary for student success, but so are life skills;

Parents', students' and community values influence learning.

MEMBERS OF THE VISITING TEAM

Ted P. Lovato, Consultant, Utah State Office of Education, Visiting Team
Chairperson

Kristopher Cary, Landmark High School, Nebo School District

VISITING TEAM REPORT

CBA CENTER

CHAPTER 1: SCHOOL PROFILE

The CBA Center is a public charter school that works with students using an alternative education philosophy and setting. The school serves students, primarily from the Millard County School District, who would normally attend Millard High School and/or Delta High School. The CBA Center is structured in a traditional seven-period school day, serving 37 students in grades 9 to 12. The school's mobility rate is 80.8 percent.

a) *What significant findings were revealed by the school's analysis of its profile?*

The staff members at the CBA Center realize the many challenges they have with alternative high school students, from poor attendance habits to non-support, generally, from the home. Change is inevitable, and several changes have been made to the program throughout its nine-year history in an attempt to improve the academic performance of at-risk students. Programs offered must be re-evaluated and revised constantly. However, because of these program modifications and implementation, the CBA Center is able to serve the diverse needs of the students who are enrolled.

b) *What modifications to the school profile should the school consider for the future?*

The school needs to continue to improve ways to measure student achievement more effectively—not only tracking from year to year, but disaggregating for gender and other specifications—in order to achieve accurate, reliable, and useful data to be used to improve overall instruction.

Suggested Areas for Further Inquiry:

- The Visiting Team members feel that this school is looking out for the best interests of the at-risk students in Millard County School District. Although the school is small, the faculty needs to take a deeper look at their respective departmental analyses and see what they can do to increase student learning.
- The Visiting Team was generally impressed with the dedication and personal concern for students by the leadership and faculty of the school. A more in-depth mission statement, which truly reflects what the school is doing to serve students, is recommended.

- The Visiting Team was impressed with the pragmatic approach to the overall belief statements of the CBA Center. However, the specific needs of students need to be addressed, as should the processes to be used in making students “more productive members of society.” The action plan needs to be more in-depth using the NSSE model.

CHAPTER 2: THE SELF-STUDY PROCESS

- a) *To what extent has the school community engaged in a collaborative self-study process on behalf of students?*

The CBA Center is a small operation, but has put forth great efforts to work with all stakeholders in the self-study process. The Visiting Team and the school realize that many parents of alternative-type students are apprehensive about getting involved with school for a variety of reasons. The principal and staff are striving to make better progress in this area, but are realistic about the challenges faced in reaching a majority of parents/guardians.

The CBA Center publishes a monthly newsletter to inform parents and the community about events the students have participated in and upcoming events. The school’s website is up and operating, but could use some more effort. Involvement in the small community is somewhat limited, but school efforts are to be applauded as CBA students and staff members paint local business storefront windows during the holiday season and deliver “goodwill baskets” to neighbors.

- b) *To what extent does the school's self-study accurately reflect the school's current strengths and limitations?*

The CBA Center is open and forthright in recognizing weaknesses, and appears to be objective in identifying the school's strengths. Throughout its nine-year history the school has made many revisions and reevaluations in meeting the diverse needs of the at-risk student population.

Focus groups have done a fine job of discovering strengths and weaknesses and identifying strategies (some more attainable than others) in an attempt to improve the school as a whole.

The dedication of the school staff with at-risk students is a great strength.

CHAPTER 3: INSTRUCTIONAL AND ORGANIZATIONAL EFFECTIVENESS

The CBA Center's desired results for student learning (DRSLs) are as follows:

1. Communication Skills:

- Students communicate with clarity, purpose and understanding.
- Students integrate the use of a variety of communication forms and use a wide range of communication skills.
- Students will communicate effectively through reading, writing and oral communication across the curriculum.

2. Interpersonal Skills:

- Students work with others in a variety of situations to set and achieve goals.
- Students manage and evaluate their behavior as group members.
- Students deal with disagreements and conflict caused by diversity of opinions and beliefs.

3. Personal and Social Responsibility:

- Students take responsibility for personal actions and act ethically (demonstrate honesty, fairness and integrity).
- Students respect themselves and others and understand and appreciate the diversity and interdependence of all people.
- Students act as responsible citizens in school and in the community.

Shared Vision, Beliefs, Mission, and Goals:

- a) *To what extent did the school facilitate a collaborative process to build a shared vision for the school (mission) that defines a compelling purpose and direction for the school?*

The Visiting Team felt that all stakeholders were involved in the development of the mission statement. The mission statement is brief and to the point, but does need to be more specific as to what the school is offering at-risk students.

- b) *To what extent has the school defined a set of beliefs that reflect the commitment of the administration and staff to support student achievement and success?*

The Visiting Team feels that the administration and staff are very committed to the education of the CBA Center students. The beliefs are well thought-out and support a pragmatic view of what needs to be accomplished when working with at-risk students, but there is a need for a more in-depth view of what, specifically,

needs to be accomplished to increase academic learning for students at the CBA Center.

- c) *To what extent do the school's mission and beliefs align to support the school's desired results for student learning (DRSLs)?*

The mission and beliefs of the CBA Center reflect the school's DRSLs. The school staff members realize they are working with a nontraditional student body, and the DRSLs reflect that.

Curriculum Development:

- a) *To what extent does the staff work collaboratively to ensure the curriculum is based on clearly defined standards and the Utah Core Curriculum (with inclusion of the Utah Life Skills)?*

The school staff is committed to meeting the standards outlined in the Utah Core curriculum, and work closely with Millard High School and Delta High School in matching prescribed courses (especially those that address the diverse learning needs of the CBA Center student). Some students are desirous of returning to their resident high school in an attempt to graduate, while others choose to graduate from the CBA Center.

The school staff worked with the Utah Life Skills throughout the self-study process, and found it to be valuable as an overall guide.

- b) *To what extent does the teaching staff work collaboratively to support the development of a curriculum that focuses on the school's desired results for student learning?*

The Visiting Team observed that the teaching staff evaluates the curriculum based on the student performance data and goals the school has set. The school staff realizes that the at-risk students the school serves need to develop interpersonal skills and personal and social responsibility in order to be successful after leaving high school. There is some frustration due to student high mobility rates and the inconsistent attendance patterns of students. There is a strong belief among all staff members that students make significant achievement when parents are involved and concerned.

In addition, a very small staff (due to a small student enrollment) presents many challenges.

Quality Instructional Design:

- a) *To what extent does the professional staff design and implement a variety of learning experiences that actively engage students?*

The staff faces the difficult task of working with at-risk students in a small-town environment, with a limited budget; thus, they go to great lengths to provide a wide variety of instructional experiences, which are aligned with goals and expectations. Technology, though somewhat limited, is used well.

As stated previously, the CBA Center works closely with Millard and Delta High Schools and engages students with the Delta Technical Center, where they are offered a wide array of vocational courses. Juniors and seniors have the opportunity to take part in the School-to-Careers program, which helps students gain elective credit while on the job.

- b) *To what extent does the professional staff employ a variety of instructional strategies to ensure the needs of different learners are met?*

In most classrooms observed, the Visiting Team agreed that CBA Center teachers don't teach subjects, they teach students. The students interviewed felt valued and treated as individuals who possess individual and diverse needs. It was mentioned in the student interview session that competition is eliminated; thus, students feel they can perform at their own level and speed.

Teachers at the CBA Center appropriately allocate their time to group instruction, individual instruction, group activity, and assessment and evaluation.

- c) *To what extent do the professional staff and leadership provide additional opportunities which support student learning?*

Students are given the opportunity to achieve academic success through additional individualized assistance by teachers, highly motivated classroom aides, cooperative learning groups, instructional resources, and daily tracking and monitoring. Students are afforded ongoing relationships with their home high schools, the Delta Technical Center, School-to-Careers programs, and online instruction (i.e., the Electronic High School).

Quality Assessment Systems:

- a) *To what extent has the staff developed classroom or school-wide assessments based on clearly articulated expectations for student achievement?*

The CBA Center assessment strategies are directly linked to specific teacher instructional use, and student achievement is based on continuous improvement of

the learning process. The school has identified the information needs of various decision-makers who use the assessment results. Assessments are designed to promote students' achievement and continuous improvement of their learning.

- b) *To what extent are assessments of student learning developed using methods that reflect the intended purpose and performance standards?*

The selected methods of student assessment are aligned with the instructional approach used in the classroom and also the type of learning to be assessed. A variety of assessments are used, and teachers are continually learning and trying different methods of student assessment. The different methods provide an opportunity for the evaluation of student achievement and more accurately reflect the intended performance standards desired.

- c) *To what extent are assessments designed, developed, and used in a fair and equitable manner?*

Student assessments are designed using various methods that reflect the intended performance standards, which eliminate bias or distortion. The faculty has a shared vision of successful student learning and is working on providing models and examples that will clarify to parents and students what good performance looks like. CBA Center students are aware of the purpose of the assessments and grading criteria prior to the assessment.

Leadership for School Improvement:

- a) *To what extent does the school leadership promote quality instruction by fostering an academic learning climate and actively supporting teaching and learning?*

The Visiting Team observed the principal at the CBA Center to be a strong leader with high expectations of all staff and students. A learning climate has been established in which teaching and learning is supported. Teachers feel they have the freedom and support necessary to create and maintain an interesting and growth-promoting learning experience.

- b) *To what extent does the school leadership employ effective decision making that is data-driven, research-based, and collaborative?*

The Visiting Team observed that, because of the strong leadership, the faculty members feel appreciated and supported. Because of the small number of students enrolled and the high mobility rate, it is difficult to gather reliable data. However, the school has done an outstanding job of providing feedback to students. The collaboration process is evident, since the staff meets, discusses issues, and makes team decisions that affect students.

- c) *To what extent does the school leadership monitor progress in student achievement and instructional effectiveness through a comprehensive assessment system and continuous reflection?*

The administrator at the CBA Center uses a hands-on approach in working with students and is well known and respected. The administrator actively monitors the progress of students toward the goal of graduation and achievement of essential knowledge and skills. Regular meetings with all staff members are held to review the status of students.

The Visiting Team feels that the remediation efforts for low results on standardized tests (such as the UBSCT) need to be strengthened.

- d) *To what extent does the school leadership provide skillful stewardship by ensuring management of the organization, operations, and resources of the school for a safe, efficient, and effective learning environment?*

The Visiting Team feels that, due to the small size of the school, and the fact that the principal's office is part of a larger classroom allows him to have access to students on a regular and consistent basis. He works closely with the central office in attempts to improve the school.

- e) *To what extent does the school leadership make decisions related to the allocation and use of resources which align with the school goals, the achievement of the DRSLs, and school improvement efforts?*

Decisions about resource allocation are made in a collaborative fashion, with special attention paid to the DRSLs and mission statement established. Application of those somewhat limited resources toward achievement of the DRSLs will become more effective with improved articulation and development of the DRSLs.

- f) *To what extent does the school leadership empower the school community and encourage commitment, participation, collaboration, and shared responsibility for student learning?*

It is evident to the Visiting Team that the self-study involved as many stakeholders as possible. Certainly, every effort is made to make parents share responsibility for the academic success of their students.

Community Building:

- a) *To what extent does the school foster community building and working relationships within the school?*

The CBA Center has a positive and productive working relationship among most of the students, teachers, support staff, and administrators. The staff members believe that they foster and sustain a learning environment that both nurtures and provides a sense of belonging for each student who attends the school. This was evident to the Visiting Team in many conversations with students and teachers.

- b) *To what extent does the school extend the school community through collaborative networks that support student learning?*

The CBA Center offers SEOP conferences where parents are encouraged to meet with their student's teachers. The school uses an "open door" policy to entice parents to come to the school and become more involved in their child's academic success. In addition, the CBA Center has established working relationships within the community by working with many community organizations, specifically the Delta Community Center, Millard County Public and Mental Health, Division of Child and Family Services, Work Force Services, etc.

Culture of Continuous Improvement and Learning:

- a) *To what extent does the school build skills and the capacity for improvement through comprehensive and ongoing professional development programs focused on the school's goals for improvement?*

Professional development programs and workshops are available for the administrator, counselor, teachers, and support staff; because they are so small in number, the staff members are able to meet often and share skills and ideas to determine how best to implement overall school improvement. More opportunities for professional development are sought, and these have become part of the school's action plan.

All teachers are working toward ELL endorsements, and three teachers on the staff are working toward advanced degrees.

- b) *To what extent does the school create conditions that support productive change and continuous improvement?*

The Visiting Team observed the school's willingness to change the curriculum and programs as needed to improve the school focus to meet student needs. The Visiting Team perceived that the school sustains a commitment to continuous improvement and renewal.

CHAPTER 4: NORTHWEST ASSOCIATION OF ACCREDITED SCHOOLS (NAAS) STANDARDS I-XI

Standard I – Educational Program

This standard is met. The CBA Center's instructional and organizational practices, as well as its policies and procedures, support the desired results for student learning and prepare students to succeed in a culturally diverse, democratic society.

Standard II – Student Personnel Services

This standard is met. Student personnel services are designed to give systematic assistance to students. The assigned personnel for guidance includes a minimum of one full-time person for each 400 students enrolled.

Standard III – School Plant and Equipment

This standard is met. The school plant provides for a variety of instructional activities and programs and incorporates aesthetic features that contribute to a positive educational atmosphere. However, the Visiting Team feels that the total program would greatly improve if the school were all under one roof, instead of in four portables that are not physically connected. A student commons area would benefit the school.

Standard IV – Library Media Program

This standard is met. The school library media program is a primary resource for literacy, information, and curriculum support. A certified library media teacher provides instruction, resources, and activities to promote independent use of ideas and information. The CBA Center has access to additional local resources to improve media access.

Standard V – Records

This standard is met. Student records are maintained, handled, and protected in the best interests of students and parents. Students and parents have the right to access personal student records and are ensured the privacy of such, as guaranteed by federal legislation.

Standard VI – School Improvement (This is addressed in the self-study.)

This standard is met. The school improvement plan focuses on the total school rather than each of the separate components within the school.

Standard VII – Preparation of Personnel

This standard is met. All professional personnel are in compliance with the licensing requirements of the state of Utah and are properly endorsed for the subjects they are assigned.

Standard VIII – Administration

This standard is met. The administration of the CBA Center provides educational leadership, supervises and coordinates programs, and carries out the necessary administrative procedures.

Standard IX – Teacher Load

This standard is met. The total number of students instructed by any one teacher in any one grading period does not exceed numbers set by the Utah State Office of Education and/or Northwest.

Standard X – Activities

This standard is met. The CBA Center is an alternative education, public charter school that supports a range of activities that supplement the basic instructional program by providing additional interests and experiences for learning to take place.

Standard XI – Business Practices

This standard is met. The school is financially responsible. Proper budgetary procedures and generally accepted accounting principles are followed for all school funds. The school's advertising and promotional literature are completely truthful and ethical.

CHAPTER 5: SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT EFFORTS – ACTION PLAN

- a) *To what extent is the school-wide action plan adequate in addressing the critical areas for follow-up?*

Short- and long-range plans are listed that are directly related to the needs of at-risk students (i.e., improved communication skills and improving life skills). The Visiting Team recommends that much more attention be given to determining which persons are in charge of different parts of the plan, and to deciding what, specifically, is needed to carry out the plan. The format of the present plan is very brief and does not conform to the suggested (more thorough and detailed) outline

of the Utah accreditation process. The present plan does, however, address important and critical needs of the at-risk population the CBA Center serves on a daily basis.

- b) *To what extent is there sufficient commitment to the action plan, school-wide and system-wide?*

It appears to the Visiting Team that there is a high degree of commitment school-wide to the action plan. The teachers feel support from the principal, and the administration feels support from district leaders.

- c) *How sound does the follow-up process that the school intends to use for monitoring the accomplishments of the school-wide action plan appear to be?*

As mentioned above, the plan needs to be more thorough and detailed. A better, more specific follow-up plan is needed, and the NSSE format should be used. The staff, however, is committed to the success of the plan, even with the shortfalls listed above.

CHAPTER 6: MAJOR COMMENDATIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS OF THE VISITING TEAM

Commendations:

- The Visiting Team commends the staff of the CBA Center for the professional work completed with the self-study. It was thorough, informative, and visually well-presented. It will be a good tool for the CBA Center to use in the improved operation of the school.
- The administration, teachers, and classified staff are to be commended for the caring, passionate, and dedicated way they work with at-risk students. It is apparent that the individual needs of each student are important to this staff, and that they work to meet those needs.
- The principal is a competent, dedicated leader who is respected and liked by the students and staff.
- The Millard County School District and board of education are to be commended for the support given to the CBA Center and the alternative education philosophy used in educating at-risk youth. In addition, the Visiting Team commends the support given to allowing teachers from the traditional high school to teach courses at the CBA Center.

Recommendations:

- The Visiting Team recommends that the action plan and goals be more in-depth, and the NSSE model be utilized as a strong guideline. In addition, specific names of individuals assigned to lead and complete the various tasks should be listed.
- The Visiting Team recommends that the school adopt and develop a strong anti-drug message and program in an attempt to resolve problems with substance abuse among students.
- The Visiting Team recommends that the school facilities be improved to better support student learning. A student commons area would be beneficial to all.
- The Visiting Team recommends that the UBSCT remediation program be strengthened to better serve students deficient in the areas of reading, comprehension, writing, and mathematics.
- The Visiting Team recommends that, when feasible, more staff members be added to provide for more direct instruction of core classes.